



The Jacob Journal

Happy New Year from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

January 2006

Jessica's Law Initiative is a Safety Necessity

If approved, it would be the toughest sex offender law in the United States

For nearly a year, San Diegans have had an unfortunate front row seat to the sick saga of two sexually violent predators fighting for release from a state mental institution.

The convoluted State laws that allow career rapist Douglas Badger and professional pedophile Matthew Hedge to petition for their freedom have moms, dads and just about everybody else shaking their fists in confusion and anger.

As if the deeply-flawed Sexually Violent Predator program isn't enough to raise public hackles, frequent news accounts of children being victimized by repeat sex offenders leave us stupefied, wondering why, in the name of all that is sane, are these dangerous recidivists stalking unsuspecting communities instead of languishing behind bars.

Less than a year ago, family and friends of Jessica Lunsford experienced the worst kind of furor when a convicted sex offender crawled through the 9-year-old Florida girl's bedroom window while she was sleeping. She was kidnapped, sexually

assaulted and brutally murdered by a man whose 23 prior arrests included child molestation and indecent exposure.

Through his grief, Jessica's father made one simple vow: Never again. Since then he and others have taken aim at States whose lenient sex offender laws continue to put the needs of offenders ahead of the needs of victims and their families. Last month San Diego County vowed to stand by his side. The way we see it, we had no choice.

San Diego County has formally urged the State of California to strengthen the guidelines of its Sexually Violent Predator program no fewer than four times. Our common-sense requests have been specific and essential, yet

the County's changes have been mostly ignored. Among other changes, we've asked for more than ten days for the public to comment on the release of a Sexually Violent Predator and public notification if conditions of an offender's release are modified.

Over and over, the County has formally asked that specific laws governing all sex offenders— not just Sexually Violent Predators— be made stronger. We've asked for safe zones around schools, parks and day care centers and called for an end to placing registered offenders in counties where their victims reside. We're still waiting.

The possession of child pornography, for example, remains a misdemeanor despite

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Jessica's Law

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the best efforts of the County to increase the charge to a felony.

Especially distressing was the length of time it took to post the Megan's Law sex offender database on the Internet. For years, parents, who are legally entitled to view critical public information about registered sex offenders, including names, photos, criminal histories and addresses, were forced to make special trips to law enforcement facilities to access it. For busy parents this was an unnecessary burden.

While my colleagues and I kept rallying to put the information on the web, more aggressive states like Alaska, Florida and Connecticut were

legally fighting to make more detailed information available.

Is it any wonder why the Jessica's Law Initiative is gaining ground in San Diego County and throughout the State? The initiative does what some have failed to do! It includes many of the exact changes that San Diego County has been pushing for years.

Key provisions of the initiative include: lifetime GPS tracking of sex offenders, predator free zones near schools, an end to the use of "good time" credits for reduced prison terms and stiffer sentences and fines across the board. It also expands

the Sexually Violent Predator program to allow for the special designation after one offense, instead of waiting for a second.

Supervisor Ron Roberts and I want to add your name to the

growing list of people who think our kids deserve better protection from sex offenders.

For Polly, Amber, Megan and Jessica, we must act now before the

name of another innocent child is

added to this tragic list.



NEVER AGAIN: Jessica's Law protects kids and honors the legacy of the 9-year-old.

Learn more about the Jessica's Law Initiative. Visit www.JessicasLaw.com!

State Can't Ignore Clash of Pot Laws

There's more than one reason why the County has refused to implement a State-mandated medical marijuana ID card and registry program. The most important reason by far, is the clear illegality of the task.

In effect, the State has put a gun to the County's head, and is demanding that it create a program for a drug that the federal government views as illegal. Think about it.

The State has mandated the County to create a database of medical marijuana users, but the federal government says there's no such thing as "medical" marijuana. Since the federal government has no plans to stop prosecuting marijuana users, Sacramento is forcing the County

to subject its residents to federal arrest. Sort of makes you wonder what they're smoking up there.

Supervisor Jacob's position on Prop. 215 hasn't changed since 1996. She believes the law is convoluted, hypocritical and adds more mud to already muddy waters.

The American Medical Association does not support medical marijuana at this time. The Drug Enforcement Administration says marijuana has no medicinal value that can't be met more effectively with legal drugs.

If the State is so convinced of the merits of this program, Supervisor Jacob thinks it should be shouldering the burden of its implementation instead of saddling the County with an illegal task.

Community Round Up

County takes closer look at bulky sea cargo containers

Normally, you see them stacked like bricks on the decks of giant cargo ships. Sea cargo containers transport everything from doll parts to automobiles.

When these jumbo receptacles reach the end of their usefulness, the shipping industry often sells them to private citizens who use them for storage.

If the number of calls to the County is any indication, residents have big-time concerns about the bulky boxes being used as storage facilities on properties in unincorporated communities.

If not properly restored or improved, the containers can be more than eyesores. They can be dangerous too!

Supervisor Jacob and her colleagues have ordered a review of ordinances and regulations on the containers, specifically in residential areas. The review will be presented to the Board in the spring, and will include recommendations on ways to guarantee compatibility with surrounding land uses and community character.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Supervisor Jacob invites you to an informal coffee to share your thoughts and ideas.

Friday, January 27, 2006

8:30 a.m.

**Michael's Grill
9621 Mission Gorge Road
Santee**



Play Ball Lemon Grove!

Here's something to cheer about for little league fans in Lemon Grove. Supervisor Jacob recently secured \$100,000 in County funds to help the Lemon Grove Little League improve their dug-out, tee-ball field and outfield fences. They'll also be able to upgrade and re-sod fields, and purchase and install perimeter fencing, facility gates, a retaining wall and other upgrades.

A Storybook Beginning for New Library in Campo

At five times the size of its predecessor, the new library in Campo is delighting more than community bookworms.

Internet access and technology workshops are helping the community keep pace with technology.

After-school reading programs are giving area students a leg up on learning.

Supporters who made building a reality include

Pat Noblitt and Shirley Jones of the Campo-Morena Village Friends of the Library. Patrick Judd, Superintendent of the Mountain Empire School District and Patricia Jones, Principal of Campo Elementary deserve credit along with Steve Gordon, Principal of Hillside Junior-Senior High School.

Special thanks to Jose Aponte, Director of the San Diego County Library and John McTighe, Director of the County Department of General Services.



A New Page: Jacob and friends cut the ribbon on the new library in Campo. (Photo by J. McTigh)

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